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*Secretary*  
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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MAR 29 1993

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Honorable Dan Glickman  
House of Representatives  
2311 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Glickman:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of Dave Bishop of Canton, Kansas. Your constituent complains that Multimedia Cablevision in Wichita did not pay him for his contracting work.

Your constituent's complaint apparently involves a private dispute over which this agency has no jurisdiction. Therefore, we cannot offer assistance in this matter.

The enclosed publications discuss in more detail the cable proceedings to which Mr. Bishop has referred in the latter part of his letter. In these proceedings, the Commission has solicited comments from all interested parties, including not only cable operators but also broadcasters, subscribers, and consumer groups. Your constituent's letter will be placed in the record of these proceedings so that the Commission can be mindful of his concerns during its deliberations.

I trust that the foregoing and the enclosures are informative.

Sincerely,

*Roy J. Stewart*

Roy J. Stewart  
Chief, Mass Media Bureau

Enclosures

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List A B C D E

DAN GLICKMAN  
FOURTH DISTRICT—KANSAS

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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1604

March 3, 1993

*1090*

The Honorable Alfred Sikes  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 814  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Sikes:

I am writing this letter in regard to a request from Dave Bishop.

I have enclosed a copy of the correspondence I received from Mr. Bishop which explains the request. I would greatly appreciate any information you could share with me regarding the concerns detailed by the enclosed letter. If you have any questions or desire additional information, please feel free to contact Ray Maldonado in my Wichita office as he is assisting me in this matter.

With best regards,

DAN GLICKMAN  
Member of Congress

DG:ram  
Enclosure

Dan Glickman  
2371 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Canton, Ks.  
Feb 9, 1993

REF: Multimedia Cablevision (Wichita Cable TV)

MAR 01

Dear Dan,

I am writing this letter to you because of your recent experience with this particular cable TV company. You have first hand knowledge of just how ruthless and unethical they can be. I'll try to keep this letter short, but please read it all, because I have several points to make.

I operate a very small, one man electronics shop, doing sales and service on primarily communications radio and computers. A few years ago, the FCC made rulings that required cable TV companies to certify that they were not leaking harmful interference into the airspace above the city. As the deadline for compliance came near, the cable companies were scrambling to develop systems and procedures to satisfy the FCC. In 1988, Multimedia contacted me to develop a system to measure and certify their compliance. At that time, I had worked as a contractor for their company for over 10 years, handling a wide variety of very specialized, high tech projects. I already owned most of the expensive test equipment, and they thought that I was uniquely qualified to handle the project. At that point I had no reason to suspect that they would not pay me, or that they would later actually blackball my operation.

Early discussions on the leakage project centered on the fact that Multimedia's business alone would not justify the expense of the system development. Before I was willing to commit to such a large investment, I wanted their assurance that they would refer my services to the other cable companies within a few hundred miles. As I'm sure you are aware, the cable TV business is very much a "good old boy" operation, where an individual cable company can literally make or break a small contractor. Without Multimedia's referrals, I would have zero chance marketing my services on my own. The bottom line is that with their assurances of future business, Five friends and I formed a team to pursue the project. We invested 2 years of our lives, \$40,000 of my bank's money, and came up with a state of the art measurement system that substantially outperformed anything else on the market. I was full time on the project, the others had regular jobs, and worked evenings and weekends. None of us were paid for our time from the development funds, that was all used for out of pocket expenses and specialized equipment. Our

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The problems arose in 1990, after I had gone to great  
expense to do a full scale demonstration over the city of

They have a free hand to do exactly as they please, to whoever they please, whenever they please, with no objection. The Cable Act of 1992 places the authority for rate regulation almost exclusively at the local level. The problem is that the locals are scared to death of the cable people, and have been quietly coached into not exercising rate regulation. I recently had a meeting with the city manager of Lyons, Kansas. He told me of a recent visit from a Multimedia VP. The VP wanted to make sure that the franchise precluded any input from the city regarding rate controls, and a further advisement that the city would not want to regulate rates anyway because of the hassles at the federal level. As I read it, the Cable Act will probably invalidate portions of franchises that deal with no local rate control, but this VP was already laying the groundwork to retain rate control at their corporate level. Recently, the FCC asked the cable TV industry how to go about rate regulation (the comment deadline was Jan 27). Isn't that a bit like asking the resident fox in the henhouse how best to insure the safety of the chickens?

2. Several years ago, the FCC established frequencies that were set aside for educational purposes. Universities and other school systems were assigned blocks of channels to use to broadcast educational material, classroom instruction, etc. Butler County Community College is a fine example of the use for which these channels were intended. One instructor at a central location can simultaneously teach multiple classrooms at remote locations, answer questions from students via 2-way audio hookup. It allows students out in the boonies access to the best classroom instruction, from top teachers. Many of the remote classrooms have only a few students, so their access to the best teachers and courses is limited, unless they are able to travel, or live in at the campus. With a very simple receiver converter, the public is able to receive these broadcasts, and learn as well. If you tune in the educational channels (ITFS) in Wichita, you will find movies, sports, and advertisements, that is, if you have a descrambler and converter furnished by Antennavision, and faithfully pay your monthly bill.

The cable people have been coached by state attorneys

Consider the fact that, a few years ago, the cable people dictated that independent "superstations" (WTBS, WGN, etc) and the so-called GOD channels must scramble their satellite feeds in order to be carried on cable TV. The result is that these "free TV" services could either scramble, and be sold to millions of cable subscribers exclusively by the local cable company, or they could resist scrambling, and be received free by just a few dish owners out in the boonies. The cable people have perverted the satellite technology that was financed by tax money, intended for the public good, and turned it into a cash cow for their own benefit. Tax dollars financed every bit of the research and development that

If they are forced to be reasonable, if not downright decent corporate citizens, then perhaps these abuses of consumers, politicians, and my interest, small contractors, will stop. Hopefully, Al Gore will be able to turn the tide somewhat as VP, but probably more impact will be gained if Toni Cook (major contributor of ideas in S.12) is appointed FCC Chairman. Judging from the articles and editorial content of the cable TV trade publications I receive, the industry seems to be afraid of the new administration, and what they might do. In particular, CABLE WORLD, Jan 4, 1993 edition, refers to Al Gore as a "know nothing throwback" followed by another comment, "in America anything is possible, unfortunately". I think this shows the overall, general contempt of the cable industry towards the government, and elected officials. Apparently, if you're not in bed with them, then you are automatically an enemy. A know nothing